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NSC BRIEFING

28 October 1959

CUBA

I. Trend of past few weeks indicates real threat of extremist control, and there is almost no hope Fidel Castro can be influenced to moderate his course or recognize danger of Communism.

A. Castro relies almost entirely on leftist advisers, and last week said: "If they want to call us Communists for what we are doing, then I say let them...."

B. Raul Castro is now in cabinet as minister of all police and military forces, which he is reorganizing.

Che Guevara, probably the real power in National Agrarian Reform Institute, is in charge of industrial planning and development.

1. He sponsored law, passed by cabinet on 27 Oct, withdrawing important mineral concessions and sizably increasing taxes on current mining operations--which include US government-owned Nicaro nickel plant.

D. On Tuesday the cabinet reinstituted revolutionary tribunals to try counterrevolutionaries.

1. Fidel has publicly announced that anyone who advocates elections should be considered a counterrevolutionary.

E. The relatively few moderate members of government (such as Finance Minister and National Bank president) seem now to be ignored.

II. Many Cubans who do not agree with present trend seem to feel they have little choice but to go along despite reported misgivings.

A. At big rally on Monday, Cuban Labor Federation (CTC) officials, Orthodox party leader Agramonte, and the Cuban student federation leader, all spoke in support of 26th of July Movement; and Fidel publicly thanked former President Prio for being present.

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DATE: 12-26-78

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